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GENERAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
**INFORMATION REPORT**

COUNTRY

Bulgaria

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Farm Economy/Comments on Army

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SUPP. TO  
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1. "In the overall world equation, Bulgaria figures but casually. Her industrial output is insignificant. Her vegetable exports have been reduced to the limits of Hungary; her scholars and artists respected little in world circles; and even in the sphere of Cominformism Bulgaria plays a secondary underdeveloped role. She neither has the manpower of China nor the industrial potential of Czechoslovakia, nor the historic European role of Poland.
2. "And ever since Dimitrov's death, even the center of Cominformism has been shifted from Sofia to Warsaw. Nevertheless, Bulgaria has a strategic importance which the West underestimates, NATO seems to have taken no cognizance of, and Moscow fully realizes. And as the first report / [ ] on Bulgaria indicated, Moscow went at great lengths and pains to assure for herself a friendly Sofia, if not Bulgaria.
3. "This importance is historic. Czar Alexander II greedily eyed the Balkans and occupied a major portion of it. In 1878 Sofia became the capital of the newly-created state of Bulgaria; and this for the obvious reason that Sofia could dart its eyes meticulously on Istanbul (then Constantinople), Belgrade, Macedonia, and the Danube.
4. "The Red Czars have not lost their interest in this zone either. With Yugoslavia out of the Cominform and more than that an active ally of NATO members Greece and Turkey, Moscow's interest in Bulgaria has increased.

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5. "Sofia is 230 miles from Belgrade and 300 miles from Istanbul. The Bulgarian port of Bourgas is being spectacularly developed to keep an eye on Turkish shippings in the Bosphorus. A military expert at NATO maneuvers in northern Greece stated that Bulgaria had three times the artillery power of Turkey.
6. "And although no correct estimates are available either in Sofia or in any of the Free Balkan capitals, it is gathered that Bulgaria has twenty well-equipped and prepared divisions. All through Bulgaria I saw army formations under training, and most of the traffic on the highways was army vehicular traffic. In the Macedonian villages, known for silkworm breeding and good quality maize, each family was minus a couple of males--all conscripted, of course.
- 25X1 7. "The soldiers [ ] were not very well uniformed and were not very smartly turned out either. Often they paraded the streets of Sofia singing the national anthem, Marxist Internationale, or else the poems of Bulgarian revolutionary poet, Hristo Smeyrensky. And yet the defense ministries of Greece and Turkey are under the strange illusion that Bulgaria is a nonentity. Only the Defense Ministry at Belgrade takes Bulgaria seriously, and it too dismisses that country's strength with a strange childish ease. That such is not the position of Bulgaria, I am very certain; and there were some real fears that Bulgaria's hitting power may completely outmaneuver the calculations of the Free Balkans. The NATO must keep this in view.
8. "Bulgaria, her army activities apart, remains an enigma and presents a complex picture. This complexity is multiplied in the economic phase of the country. To get at correct figures in Bulgaria is like searching one's way through a confusing labyrinth. Various government offices give different and contradictory reports. Even the wheat harvest was given by two ministries as different. But some basic realities of Bulgarian economy are obvious.
9. "Bulgaria is largely an agricultural country with four thousand villages and over a million peasants. The industries don't claim more than 150 thousand workers; and this last figure is also exaggerated in view of the Marxist ideology creating by sheer compulsion a proletariat class.
10. "The peasant, however, remains an important economic factor even though as a political entity he is not as important as the numerically less labor class. If official figures are acceptable, and they seem true, then Bulgaria has today [as of mid-October 1953] four thousand tractors and 1500 combines and threshers.
11. "The wheat crop has been around 400 kilograms per acre, although at one research farm (2500 acres in all) production has been 800 kilograms per acre.
12. "The official communique at the end of the 1953 harvest read something like this: 'Harvest days...Our fertile plains are seething with happy labor. Joy fills the hearts of the Bulgarian peasants; joy in the plentiful harvest.'
13. "But then within the same year Sofia newspapers in a chorus, and obviously at the instigation of the government, condemned the peasant for neglect in spite of Soviet imported mechanical farming equipment. Obviously the picture is not as rosy as the government communique showed at first hand.
14. "In 1953 estimates were that the wheat crop was a good 30 per cent less than that stipulated by the government. An official at Sofia explained this by blaming the uncollectivized peasants. Almost half of the one million peasants have successfully resisted collectivization. Sofia did not take this lying down. These people have been deprived of electricity (only 1200 villages have electricity), of the countryside theater, of rest homes, and often of tractors and combines. On an average there should be one tractor to a village. The truth is that some villages have almost a score of tractors and combines, while in some villages [ ] but horse-pulled plows and carts.

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15. "Tillable land was increased by 33 per cent in collectivized villages, and the corresponding increase in uncollectivized villages was a mere 2.2 per cent. The government tractors were just not made available to one group.
16. "The result has been a disintegration and a subsequent wrong fixation, of much of the country's farm produce. The Bulgarian tobacco, strawberries, and tomatoes, which always found ready markets on the Continent, are suffering from the lack of markets. The fruit trade at one time explained for almost US\$150 million trade with what is now Western Europe. Today this trade is no more than US\$40 million. And Eastern Europe has not been the necessary market for this produce either. During 1925-38 tobacco constituted 38.6 per cent of Bulgarian export. From 1949-51 it was almost 50 per cent of Bulgarian exports. But during the last two years [1952 and 1953] the production fell by 14 per cent and the international demand limited to Eastern Europe.
17. "And Macedonia, home of silkworm and tobacco, is becoming the unfortunate victim of Sofian anger. Macedonia spreads to three other Balkan nations--Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey. The Macedonian peasant is a 'couldn't-care-less' type of individual, who nevertheless values his personal traditions very much. Often he shrugs his shoulders on contemporary ideological questions, meaning neither yes nor no.
- 25X1 18. " [redacted] a Sofian writer, in almost agonizing tones, suggested [redacted]  
25X1 [redacted] "Today a gang of Macedonian traitors, acting as tools of Belgrade chauvinists, are playing the master in the heroic towns. With brazen cynicism they Serb-ize (the relatively richer province of Yugoslavia) the Macedonian language andilessly deport the population. All Macedonians know that it is their countryman in Pirin Macedonia, within the boundaries of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, who alone enjoy real freedom!"
19. "The sad fact remains that even Sofia's attitude towards Macedonia has been rather step-brotherly. Till 1952 a regular stream of refugees entered Turkey and Yugoslavia from Bulgaria. The Macedonians, unfortunately, don't have the capacity and the will to decide their own destiny. But they continue to be the backbone of their nation's farm economy; and [redacted] Forget the immortal saying of a Macedonian revolutionist, Gotse Delchev: 'My conception of the world is that it should only be a field of cultural competition among nations.'
20. "Unfortunately, Macedonia became the experimental ground, and the failing ground as well, for an unsuccessful, unproductive, land collectivized scheme."

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